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(Almost) Everything You Know About GamerGate is Wrong

Harassment campaign? Misogynist hate mob? Alt-right test run? It's much more complicated.

Cathy Young Follow
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Credit: Alessandra Eusebio

Five years ago, a hashtag was born that blew up the internet — or, some will say, the world as we know it. It was sparked by one man's blogpost about his messy breakup with his ex-partner, which grew into a flame war over video game criticism and then into a massive culture-war conflagration. It has been blamed for everything from the normalization of internet hate to the Donald Trump presidency. Or, as the title of the *New York Times*' recent anniversary op-ed package proclaimed, "GamerGate Is

Everything." (Apparently, GamerGate is also forever: right on the heels of the anniversary, the controversy stirred back to life when the subject of the infamous blogpost, feminist video game developer Zoe Quinn, made a #MeToo accusation against another former boyfriend and he committed suicide a few days later.)

My own retrospective view, having reported on the GamerGate saga from early on, can be summed up as: "(almost) everything you've heard about GamerGate is wrong."

The standard narrative, recycled in the *Times* and elsewhere in recent days, has made the media rounds many times before. It goes like this: A vengeful ex-boyfriend launched a harassment campaign against Quinn with a false accusation of trading sex for good reviews; the ensuing scandal unleashed an army of "misogynerds" who terrorized women, feminists, transgender people, and progressives in the video game community, forcing some women to flee their homes and/or cancel public appearances. Then, *Breitbart* publisher and populist evil genius Steve Bannon harnessed this virtual mob to boost the far right, including the racist and anti-Semitic alt-right brigades, and to recruit for Donald Trump's cyber-armies. And, because the media didn't take the threat of GamerGate seriously enough, the far right won.

2016 meme offering a satirical (and artistic) riff on the idea that GamerGate ruined the internet

The real story is far more complicated.

For instance: The ex who started it all, programmer Eron Gjoni, was a pro-social justice leftist who ostensibly intended his post on August 16, 2014 as

a "call-out" about psychological abuse (as recently noted on Twitter by strongly anti-GamerGate video game journalist Ana Valens). He also published it with support from female, and feminist, friends. Gjoni accused Quinn, a prominent progressive activist in the video game community, of multiple infidelities and deceptions — with chat screenshots as corroboration — and charged that this conduct violated Quinn's own professed ethical standards, under which a truly consensual relationship requires absolute honesty. It should be noted that, contrary to many media accounts, Gjoni never alleged that Quinn had engaged in sex-for-reviews *quid pro quo*; nor did he post his screed to 4Chan, a troll-heavy site where many posters loved to mock and torment "social justice warriors." Rather, the post was first made on the "SJW"-friendly website Something Awful, an early hub of "callout culture" where Quinn was also a poster.

The "Zoepost" was quickly taken down from SA, but not before someone saved a copy and put it up on 4Chan. That was when Quinn's online foes discovered that some of her alleged liaisons implied possible conflicts of interest — especially one with a journalist who had given Quinn positive mentions on the *Kotaku* video game website — and pounced. (For what it's worth, Gjoni told me in a 2016 interview that he actively tried to squelch those rumors.) Several forums tried to shut down these often nasty conversations; a video discussing the allegations, by YouTuber "Mundane Matt," was temporarily removed over a copyright complaint that may or may not have come from Quinn. The controversy, initially known as the "Quinnspiracy," grew.

In the midst of this skirmish, feminist media critic Anita Sarkeesian, who had just released her newest video on sexism in video games, reported that she had to temporarily leave her home due to rape and death threats.

For many politically engaged culture journalists, the attacks on Quinn and Sarkeesian were a perfect storm of gamer misogyny. On August 28, there was a flood of articles — both on video game or "geek culture" websites and in general publications — skewering gamer culture as a toxic cesspit of entitled, socially inept, woman-hating maleness and proclaiming the demise of "gamers" as an identity.

The pushback against these articles, collectively dubbed "Gamers Are Dead," drew in thousands of offended gamers. That's when the revolt really took off and became known as #GamerGate, after a hashtag started by conservative actor Adam Baldwin.

Anita Sarkeesian and Zoe Quinn testify about cyber-harassment of women at a United Nations panel in October 2015

Was this revolt anti-woman? Without question, there was some viciously misogynistic hate toward Quinn and Sarkeesian in the early chatter that led up to GamerGate, particularly in the anarchic, anonymous environment of chat rooms and 4Chan boards. Arguably, other members didn't do enough to rein it in. But it also wasn't anywhere near the majority sentiment. If there's one misconception about GamerGate that most needs correcting, says Canadian video game critic and television personality Liana Kerzner, it's "that GamerGate was one thing."

Liana Kerzner, gamer, video game journalist, and GamerGate neutral

"People came to the table with many different priorities," Kerzner, who followed GamerGate from the start and often took heat from both sides of the war, told me in an interview in July. "Some people had pre-existing grudges against Zoe Quinn. Some had pre-existing concerns about the gaming media. Some were concerned about the politicization of gaming. Some just wanted to watch it all burn."

Quinn was a polarizing figure for various reasons, including perceptions of unearned acclaim for creating a single text-based educational game, "Depression Quest." (Some of the resentment may well have been gender-based, but male game developers have gotten grief for similar reasons.) More important, Quinn was seen as a hardcore "social justice warrior" zealously enforcing political correctness dogma — for instance, playing PC police to a video game design contest for women organized by a charity called The Fine Young Capitalists. Earlier that year, Quinn had attacked TFYC over rules that allowed transgender women to enter only if they had publicly identified as female prior to the start of the contest, and had apparently undermined its promotions by denouncing the project as transphobic. As GamerGate rolled around, its members raised over $20,000 for the contest.

GamerGaters typically claimed that their movement was about "ethics in gaming journalism," a much-lampooned phrase that inspired derisive memes. But resentment of the intrusion of "social justice" into gaming culture was also a major theme, and for most "gaters" the two issues were hard to separate: the cronyism in the gaming press was seen (correctly) as overlapping with progressive groupthink.

GamerGate's gender politics have been sarcastically summed up as "boys don't like girls anywhere near their video games." But for the most part, GamerGaters — quite a few of whom were "girls" — took issue with a particular brand of feminism and identity politics that they found polarizing and censorious. They objected to constant outrage at "problematic" content (such as the commotion over dialogue in a *Batman* game in which some hoodlums called Catwoman a bitch before she pummeled them senseless) and to the crusade against overly sexualized or curvaceous female characters, an attitude dissenters like Kerzner see as a PC version of slut-shaming and body-shaming.

GamerGaters also typically believed that there was far too much fuss about gender issues in video games and in the gaming community, and that these issues were being used as a pretext to police expression (for instance, when the video game magazine *Kill Screen Daily* appended an apologetic note to an article disputing the notion of a "rape culture" in video games and offered a sheepish defense of its non-removal).

On the other hand, the GamerGate Reddit board, Kotaku In Action, had many threads celebrating women in gaming and tech — especially those who, like game developers Amy Hennig and Jade Raymond, tended to take the view that sexism in the field was not that big an issue. One hugely popular thread in October 2014 was an "Ask Me Anything" conversation

with a poster who said she was a successful female game developer who was "a huge supporter of GamerGate" and rejected the notion that gaming culture is toxic for women. GamerGate's issue was not with women; it was with anyone, female or male, who dragged social justice politics into gaming culture.

Indeed, GamerGate's mascot of choice was a "gamer girl": the ginger-haired "Vivian James," a character designed by GamerGaters for the Fine Young Capitalists contest and meant to represent young women who love gaming and don't want politics in their video games.

Vivian James

Feminist media critic and GamerGate foe Katherine Cross has described Vivian as the gamers' ideal woman, "sexually available" — even though the iconic image of Vivian shows her as non-sexualized and unsmiling — and speaking "only to agree with or echo a male gamer's sentiments." But the flesh-and-blood woman who played Vivian James at GamerGate meetups from 2014 to 2016 and went by the Twitter nickname "Cult of Vivian" — in

real life, a graduate student in biology named Nicole — told me recently that GamerGate allowed her to feel "like I finally had a voice again." Nicole says she joined Twitter in the fall of 2014 after getting banned from a "girl gamers" Reddit forum for criticizing Sarkeesian, found the #GamerGate hashtag, and decided to stick around. Of course, one could argue that Cross was correct and that Nicole's voice was welcomed by male GamerGaters because she was agreeing with them. But the same is obviously true of feminist communities.

Nicole was one of a number of women who were prominent in GamerGate in its heyday, including game journalists Georgina White and Liz Finnegan and independent game developer Jennifer Dawe. One of GamerGate's iconically ironic moments occurred in November 2014 when some male progressives on Twitter urged boycotting Dawe's new game because of her support for "that hate mob."

One of the most perceptive and balanced articles published about GamerGate in the mainstream media, a *Vox* piece by Ezra Klein in November 2014, discussed GamerGate as a symptom of "the politicization of absolutely everything." Contrary to the stereotype of GamerGate as right-wing, Klein acknowledged that many GamerGaters "see themselves as liberals" and "feel dismissed and even hated by the social justice left": "They're for equal pay and they voted for Barack Obama, so why are they being made the enemy just because the women in their games have skimpy outfits?"

(Klein's analysis was later confirmed by an admittedly non-scientific survey of GamerGaters by freelance journalist Brad Glasgow, which found that they indeed overwhelmingly voted for Obama in 2012, considered themselves liberal, and had liberal views on everything from abortion and same-sex marriage to climate change and health care.)

Klein acknowledged that "Gamergate … isn't any one thing" but a multifaceted phenomenon that included debates about what kind of video games should be made and covered, real concerns about conflict-of-interest policies in the gaming press, and backlash against "social justice warriors" on the internet. But another part of it, he wrote, was "horrifying, probably criminal, harassment against pretty much any women who dare oppose it," and that was the part getting most of the coverage in the mainstream media.

However, what Klein missed was that the "GamerGate harassment" story was also much more complicated than the mainstream narrative.

There was certainly some appalling harassment toward Quinn, Sarkeesian (who canceled a university lecture in October 2014 due to an email threatening a massacre), feminist game developer Brianna Wu (who received a death threat mentioning her home address after she mocked and trolled GamerGate), and some other people, not all of them women. Web developer and GamerGate opponent Israel Galvez was targeted by a fake 911 call that resulted in a visit from a SWAT team, a scary tactic known as "swatting." But several caveats are in order:

(1) None of the criminal or severe harassment was ever tied to anyone known to be involved in GamerGate.

The FBI spent months investigating GamerGate-related harassment; as documents show, it ended up only issuing warnings to one man who admitted sending an email threat as a "joke" and to another who had made harassing phone calls to a woman with whom he had argued in a chat room. Neither was a known GamerGater. And, while the FBI found evidence that some of the harassment around GamerGate originated on 8chan, a site known as a GamerGate hub, some of it was linked to the forums on Something Awful, frequented by anti-GamerGate, anti-8chan posters.

When GamerGaters blamed the harassment on outside trolls, it looked like an excuse or a far-fetched conspiracy theory. But Kerzner, a neutral GamerGate observer, agrees that "there was a sizable number of third-party trolls that caused the vast majority of the really bad stuff." There was at least one fairly well-documented instance in which the swatting of a GamerGate critic was traced — according to *The Verge*, hardly a GamerGate-friendly publication — to a troll from an 8chan board dedicated to "general anti-social mayhem," where "users joked about Gamergate supporters 'taking the fall' for the attack." A November 2015 post by a notorious troll known as "Wild Goose" also appears to confirm the existence of a troll nest that went after "SJWs" and "gaters" alike.

(2) While the harassment related to GamerGate was quite real, there was also a drastic failure of journalistic skepticism in reporting it.

Of course, questioning people's reports of being victimized by harassment and threats is something that should never be done lightly. But honoring that principle shouldn't preclude basic fact-checking.

For instance, in late 2014 and early 2015, there were scary reports of a GamerGate "psychopath" named Jace Connors who had made a series of videos threatening Wu; one of them featured knives, another a man in a

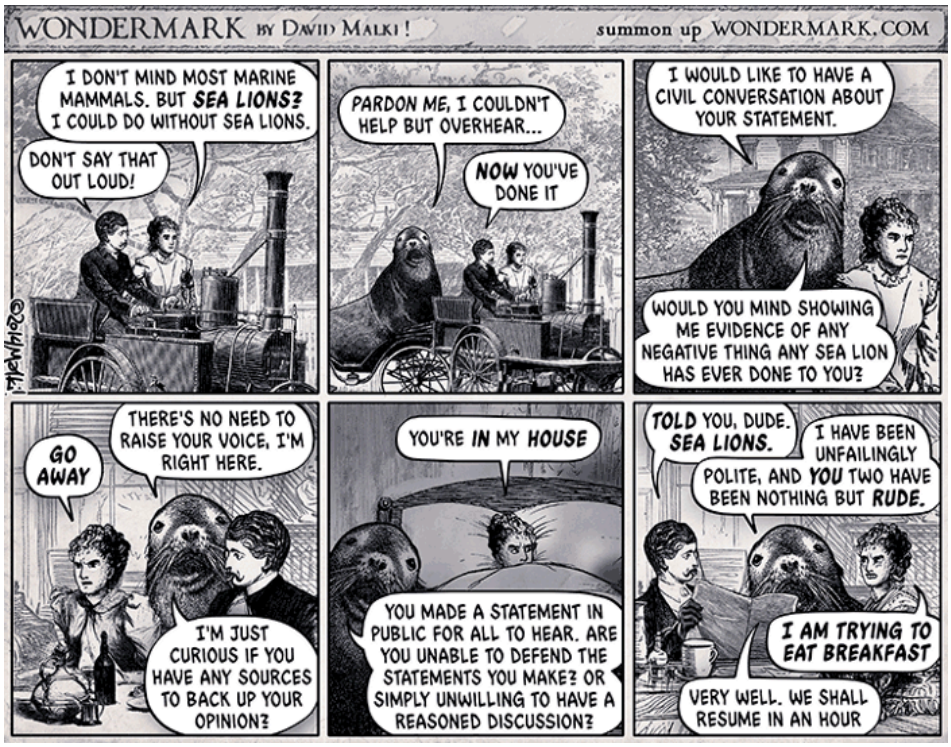
skull mask. The most bizarre one showed Connors ranting dementedly against Wu after crashing his car, supposedly on his way to her house.

In February 2015, the videos were revealed to be a satirical prank; "Jace Connors" was actually sketch comedian Jan Rankowski while the man in the skull mask was one of his sidekicks, and the purpose of the videos was to troll and mock GamerGate. Yet more than two months after this disclosure, the skull mask video was still described as an instance of horrific GamerGate harassment in a *Boston Magazine* article.

More oddly still, Wu's own *New York Times* op-ed last month asserts that GamerGaters "shot videos wearing skull masks" and displaying knives they threatened to use against her. When I reached out to Wu for comment, she initially replied that she received "many" such videos and that only GamerGaters themselves had ever claimed they were satirical — even though Wu herself was quoted commenting on the hoax in a February 2015 article in *Verge*. In a subsequent email, Wu reiterated that she was sent other videos matching the description during that time; however, none are mentioned on her Twitter timeline. (The closest is a screenshot of a tweet with a photo of what looks like a boy wearing a skull mask and holding a toy gun, and with a threat to kill Quinn, Sarkeesian, and Wu.) It seems likely that the reference in the op-ed is to the debunked "Jace Connors" incident.

(3) At least some of the portrayal of GamerGate as a harassment campaign had to do with speech that, while arguably unpleasant, was not threatening.

This speech ranged from polite but persistent unwanted attempts at debate (nicknamed "sea-lioning," from a 2014 web comic) to video blogs criticizing someone's work.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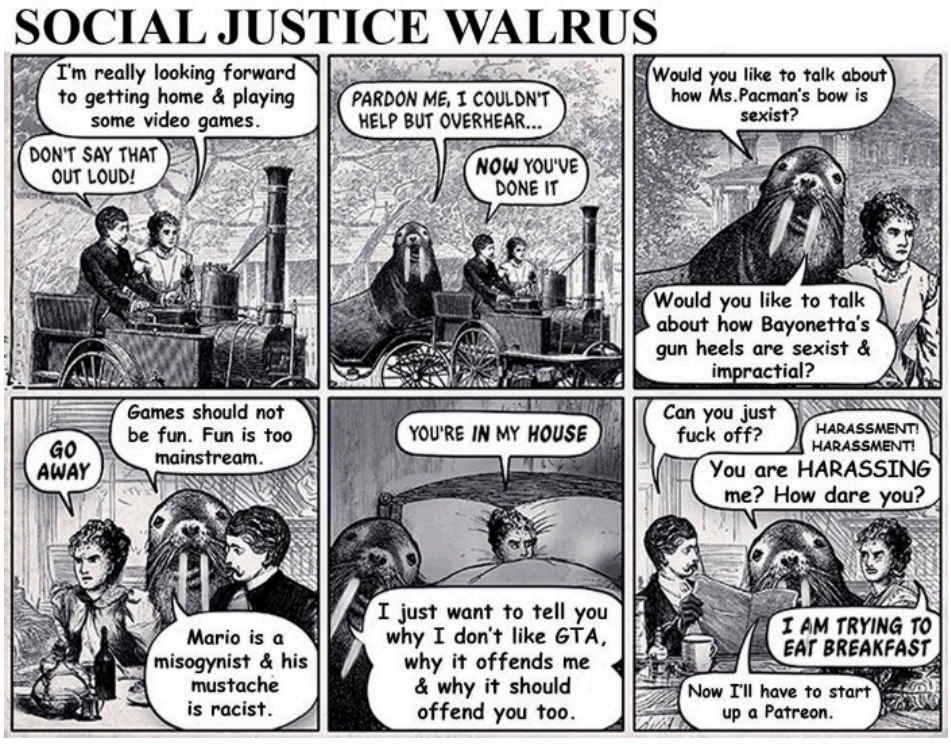
I DON'T MIND MOST MARINE MAMMALS. BUT SEA LIONS? I COULD DO WITHOUT SEA LIONS.
DON'T SAY THAT OUT LOUD!
PARDON ME, I COULDN'T HELP BUT OVERHEAR...
NOW YOU'VE DONE IT
I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE A CIVIL CONVERSATION ABOUT YOUR STATEMENT.
WOULD YOU MIND SHOWING ME EVIDENCE OF ANY NEGATIVE THING ANY SEA LION HAS EVER DONE TO YOU?
GO AWAY
THERE'S NO NEED TO RAISE YOUR VOICE, I'M RIGHT HERE.
I'M JUST CURIOUS IF YOU HAVE ANY SOURCES TO BACK UP YOUR OPINION?
YOU'RE IN MY HOUSE
YOU MADE A STATEMENT IN PUBLIC FOR ALL TO HEAR. ARE YOU UNABLE TO DEFEND THE STATEMENTS YOU MAKE? OR SIMPLY UNWILLING TO HAVE A REASONED DISCUSSION?
TOLD YOU, DUDE. SEA LIONS.
I HAVE BEEN UNFAILINGLY POLITE, AND YOU TWO HAVE BEEN NOTHING BUT RUDE.
I AM TRYING TO EAT BREAKFAST
VERY WELL. WE SHALL RESUME IN AN HOUR

"The Terrible Sea Lion" was a widely publicized web comic that purported to illustrate the dynamics of GamerGaters' supposedly civil but actually exasperating interactions with their opponents. Someone in the GamerGate camp made a counterpoint meme using the same images — "The Social Justice Walrus" — which GamerGaters felt was a more accurate illustration of those dynamics.


SOCIAL JUSTICE WALRUS
I'm really looking forward to getting home & playing some video games.
DON'T SAY THAT OUT LOUD!
PARDON ME, I COULDN'T HELP BUT OVERHEAR...
NOW YOU'VE DONE IT
Would you like to talk about how Ms.Pacman's bow is sexist?
Would you like to talk about how Bayonetta's gun heels are sexist & impractial?
GO AWAY
Games should not be fun. Fun is too mainstream.
Mario is a misogynist & his mustache is racist.
YOU'RE IN MY HOUSE
I just want to tell you why I don't like GTA, why it offends me & why it should offend you too.
Can you just fuck off?
HARASSMENT! HARASSMENT!
You are HARASSING me? How dare you?
I AM TRYING TO EAT BREAKFAST
Now I'll have to start up a Patreon.

(4) GamerGaters themselves were targets of serious harassment, a fact hardly ever acknowledged in the mainstream media (with a few exceptions such as David Auerbach, then at Slate.*)*

A number of GamerGate supporters were doxxed (i.e., had home addresses and other private information posted online) and reported threats. In 2015, two offline GamerGate events I attended — a meetup in Washington, DC and a panel examining the pro-GamerGate side of the controversy at a Society of Professional Journalists conference in Miami — were disrupted by bomb threats that forced evacuation of the building. This received virtually no coverage.

GamerGate panel at the August 2015 regional conference of the Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ) in Miami continues outdoors after being interrupted by a bomb threat. Left to right: Lynn Walsh, SPJ; Cathy Young; freelance illustrator and game writer Marc Ceb; gamer and writer Oliver Campbell. Photo by @RodHued

Given that GamerGaters were defined as the "bad guys" in social justice discourse, many supposedly right-thinking people felt free to engage in startlingly hateful invective toward anyone involved. In November 2014, Geordie Tait, a Bay-area writer for the gaming website *Star City Games*, posted a series of tweets literally calling for a Holocaust of GamerGaters; when criticized for trivializing the Holocaust, he responded by saying that the Holocaust was "not as bad as what women have suffered."

Even people who were not GamerGaters but were seen as too GamerGate-friendly (or even too neutral) were sometimes targeted. YouTuber John Bain, a popular video game critic known under the nickname "Total Biscuit," who strongly condemned harassment but also took the view that GamerGaters had some valid concerns, said that he was inundated with abusive messages while undergoing chemotherapy for colon cancer, including messages wishing for his painful death. (Some GamerGate critics

also vilified Bain after he succumbed to cancer last year.) Kerzner was a victim of false rumors intended to undermine her career — rumors that chat transcripts disclosed in 2016 seemed to confirm came from anti-GamerGate activists.

(5) Many GamerGaters not only denounced harassment toward their opponents but actively tried to curb it.

Early on, some members launched a "#GamerGate harassment patrol." In October 2014, *Kotaku* reporter Jason Schreier, a strong GamerGate critic, acknowledged on Twitter that GamerGaters were rallying to report a troll who was doxxing journalists. In a *Kotaku* article a month later, Schreier credited GamerGaters with tracking down a man responsible for a string of threats to Sarkeesian (though he still suggested that the climate created by GamerGate had probably egged the perpetrator on). This is a sharp contrast to the alt-right, which never sought to disassociate itself from racist, anti-Semitic, and misogynist harassment by its followers.

That brings us to perhaps the most contentious question: Was GamerGate a precursor to the alt-right and did it prepare the ground for Trump's election?

In a literal sense, the answer to the first part is a clear no: The alt-right as a white nationalist fringe existed at least since 2010, when Richard Spencer launched the *Alternative Right* website. However, it is true that the alt-right's online presence skyrocketed in 2015 and that a major vehicle for its attempted mainstreaming was *Breitbart*, the right-wing site which also embraced GamerGate.

In his perceptive *Vox* article in 2014, Klein noted that despite the left-of-center politics of most GamerGaters, media treatment of the controversy had been sharply divided along left/right lines: Liberal opinion was "in lockstep against Gamergate," while some conservatives and critics of the social justice left were sympathetic. *Breitbart*, in particular, made GamerGate its pet cause, starting with a September 1, 2014 article by the soon-to-be-infamous Milo Yiannopoulos titled "Feminist Bullies Tearing the Video Game Industry Apart." Yiannopoulos also championed GamerGate on Twitter; with his flashy bad-boy persona, he quickly became a hero to many in the movement, even those who otherwise had no affection for *Breitbart*'s politics.

It is also true that there were alt-right-type elements within GamerGate. As I cautioned in an early article on the movement, any backlash against extremist versions of feminism and "social justice" is likely to be a magnet

for actual misogynists, bigots, and far-right extremists. (Ironically, one example I cited was pro-GamerGate lawyer Mike Cernovich, whose past misogynist tweets had been flagged by a GamerGate opponent — and who went on to become a prominent alt-right figure before eventually attempting to distance himself from the extremist fringe.) There were also the "edgy" teens who came in by way of "/pol/," the 4chan "Politically Incorrect" board notorious for racist and anti-Semitic memes, and who thought it was good fun to post a cartoon of Sarkeesian as a greedy Jew.

"Since GamerGate didn't have any sort of people controlling its population, and it was nominally against leftists, it attracted /pol/, obviously," a Jewish GamerGater who wanted to be identified only as David, a politically centrist tech worker in his late twenties, told me in an email. Yet David also stressed that he saw "very little" anti-Semitism in GamerGate-related conversations and made many Jewish friends through the movement.

Far from setting the tone in GamerGate, its far-right members felt sufficiently embattled to start a separate 8chan forum, /ggrevolt/ (GamerGate Revolt); its denizens often disliked "regular" GamerGaters at least as much as they did "social justice warriors." Video blogger June Lapine ("Shoe0nHead" on YouTube), a 28-year-old New Yorker who was involved with GamerGate from the start, says that /ggrevolt/ was her "first introduction to what [the] 'alt-right' was."

There is strong evidence that as the alt-right began to gather steam in late 2015, Yiannopoulos tried to channel GamerGate — which he often tried to treat as his private army — in its direction. In January 2016, someone leaked chat logs in which pro-GamerGate blogger Ethan Ralph, who was close to Yiannopoulos, and several of his friends from /ggrevolt/ trashed GamerGate, agreed that the culture war needed to move on to the alt-right, and discussed plans to "reappropriate" GamerGate for the alt-right by purging liberals, who were mocked as "SJW-lite." These revelations, which coincided with intensifying harassment of GamerGaters by /ggrevolt/ types, rocked what remained of GamerGate and got Ralph banned from the Kotaku In Action board (which did not stop *The Daily Dot* from calling Ralph a "GamerGate leader" when he was arrested several months later for assaulting a police officer).

In the end, the GamerGate-to-Alt-Right pipeline never materialized. However, a number of previously liberal GamerGaters did get on the "Trump Train" in 2016. At present, still-active GamerGaters to whom I have spoken estimate that about half of the posters on Kotaku In Action are pro-Trump. Some may have fallen for the *Breitbart* lure; others saw Trump as the answer to "political correctness" or shared his hostility to the

mainstream media, which they (correctly) felt had been extremely shoddy and biased in its GamerGate coverage.

The slide toward Trumpism disappointed many GamerGate sympathizers; it also made some left-of-center GamerGaters such as Matt Jarbo — a.k.a. "Mundane Matt," the YouTuber whose video on the Quinn cronyism allegations helped start the controversy — worry if they've helped elect Trump. "I definitely don't want that on my conscience," Jarbo joked uneasily in our recent interview. Others, such as fellow YouTuber Lapine, a self-described "proud social democrat," dismiss the idea as "delusional." As Lapine puts it, "everyone is always pointing fingers at who is to blame for Trump."

Matt Jarbo, the first YouTuber to popularize GamerGate, doesn't want the Trump presidency on his conscience

Lapine is probably closer to the truth; it's very unlikely that those GamerGaters who turned to Trump had the numbers to make a difference. And, fevered speculation notwithstanding, there is not a shred of evidence that the Trump campaign used the "GamerGate playbook" — whatever that is — in its online strategies.

If not Trump, what is GamerGate's legacy? It did change the cultural landscape, for better and worse. It was the first rebellion against the politicization of popular culture by the "social justice left." (It's probably not an accident that this pushback came from gamers, who are used to being defensive about their chosen medium being blamed for social ills.) It did not exactly reverse this trend, even in video game culture: witness recent attacks on the upcoming game *Cyberpunk 2077* as "transphobic" because of an in-game poster featuring a supposedly fetishistic image of a possibly

transgender model as well as a later-deleted “did you just assume their gender?” joke on the game maker’s Twitter account.

Cyberpunk Faces Its Own Dystopian Future

Cyberpunk 2077, a soon-to-be-released video game, has been accused of transphobia. Let’s examine.

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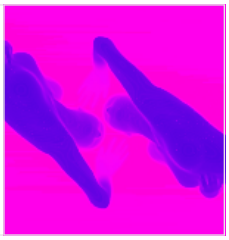

If anything, GamerGate probably made the progressive culture guardians more zealous and intolerant of dissent. But it also encouraged resistance to ideological diktat, and ultimately promoted debate. Lapine, who says she regrets being too “edgy” and “obnoxious” in her GamerGate days — for instance, mocking Quinn with gratuitous nastiness in some of her videos— still believes GamerGate played a positive role: “The internet was overrun by preachy, authoritarian feminist-types,” she wrote in an email. “And they absolutely needed to be called out (and still do!).”

Today, the dead horse of GamerGate is beaten mainly by its foes — usually as a way to discredit criticism of the social justice left. But there are important lessons from the GamerGate experience that are still relevant today, and that have nothing to do with video games.

For critics of the left, the main moral of the story is that it’s important to repudiate unsavory allies. Stuart Hayashi, a Hawaii-based libertarian blogger and onetime GamerGate supporter, believes the movement “lost its way” from the start by allowing itself to be taken in by people who “turned out to be much more corrupt than the video game journalists they decried” (Yiannopoulos being a prime example).

For journalists, GamerGate should be a cautionary tale about lumping all critics of the left together with extremists, taking the progressive “good guys” at their word, and treating an important story as having no valid “other side.” Such an approach can alienate moderates and promote a dangerous anti-media cynicism about “fake news.” Yet five years later, the media are still sticking to a simplistic and polarizing narrative that stokes the culture wars. Until that changes, it’s #GamerGate forever.

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